

August 24, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
August 21, 1959

Others present: Secretary Herter, Secretary Murphy,
Secretary Merchant, Mr. Ivan White,
General Goodpaster, Major Eisenhower

The President expressed dissatisfaction with the draft reply prepared by State to a letter to him from Mr. Cola Parker criticizing the President's invitation to Khrushchev. He felt the draft was much too defensive and lengthy. After discussion it was agreed that Mr. Robert Murphy would seek to see Mr. Parker while visiting the Mid-West in the near future and set him straight.

The President then turned to questions relating to his trip to Europe. He said he had several things on his mind, starting with the bad deportment of the Russians in rigidly demanding a certain itinerary for Khrushchev while here. He thought they were trying to "bulldoze" us. Mr. Murphy agreed that they were being very arrogant. The President authorized the State Department to tell the Russians that Khrushchev could not go to certain places. On the question of whether Khrushchev should be treated as a Chief of State or Head of Government, the President wanted to wait for Khrushchev's reply. If we find that they are insisting upon unacceptable things, the President is quite ready to tell him that the trips will be cancelled.

The President next said that he had had word indirectly that de Gaulle was arranging for his own interpreter to be the only man with the two of them at the private meeting. So far as he is concerned this is quite unacceptable. He will have Walters at any such meeting.

The President added that in fact he has the impression he is rather being told what he will do by several of these countries,

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and does not plan to accept it. At this point the President told me that he would like me to read and be completely familiar with Kistiakowsky's latest study evaluating the need for further atomic weapons tests.

The President next said that the indications are that Adenauer, after showing reason initially, had since become very inflexible in his attitudes during the last couple of weeks. Mr. Herter said he is both inflexible and deeply suspicious. Fundamentally he is approaching his problems from a domestic political standpoint -- he is fearful of the large Socialist vote in East Germany. In fact, Mr. Herter believed that Adenauer for that reason does not want a reunified Germany even though he continues to call for reunification publicly, as he must.

The President commented that if Adenauer is really fearful of reunification, he should be favorable to steps short of full reunification. Mr. Herter said the West Germans would like to have contact with the East Germans, without recognizing them, limiting contacts to the technical level, and having the Western countries represented in any committee that is set up. The President asked Mr. Herter whether all this means that we are just going to take an adamant and negative stand. He asked what ideas we have.

Mr. Herter said that the crux of the matter is that the Soviets want to destroy our protection of West Berlin. He thought it might be useful for us to tell Khrushchev that we have no desire to stay in West Berlin in perpetuity. That is why we wish to find some solution in Germany. The President asked what can be done that Adenauer will accept. Mr. Herter thought we should try to get an arrangement which would carry us over the German elections in the fall of 1961. Thereafter, contacts between the West Germans and East Germans might prove possible to work out.

Mr. Herter said there are two matters of principle involved. The Soviets are trying by pressure to get us out of our rights in West Berlin. They are also trying by pressure to get us to reduce our troops in West Berlin. The President said that if Khrushchev wants to liquidate the occupation he should agree on free elections in Germany.

The President said he would like to meet with the State Department representatives on Monday or Tuesday and have from them a working paper that he can use for each of the capitals he is going to visit. Behind that there should be a paper indicating just what are the limits to which we can go in talking to Khrushchev. Mr. Herter said he really thought that for the time being the best thing for us to do is to get a two-to-three year modus vivendi. The President said we must have our own position with respect to the Soviets on Germany very clear and with this in mind consider how we can best talk with Adenauer, Macmillan and de Gaulle.

Mr. Herter said that Adenauer will in all likelihood make a plea for the United States to support de Gaulle on Algeria. The President said that we cannot abandon our old principles of supporting a national freedom and self-determination, and we cannot join the colonialists. In his opinion we are deep enough in Europe's troubles now, and must be tough in saying that we do not propose to go deeper. Of course we can say that we are ready to support any scheme that France can work out with the little countries on the basis of mutual agreement.


Mr. Herter said that Hammarskjold had had a talk with de Gaulle regarding Algeria. It is probable that the French are simply going to ask for a "blank check" support for themselves in Algeria. The President said he knows no reason why we should change our course at this time. Mr. Herter pointed out that the French take the stand that the Algerian question is an internal problem. They do not want to fight their own battle in the United Nations but want us to fight it for them. The President said that if a bad resolution were put forward in the U N we could of course help them to fight it. He asked why they did not put in their own resolution. Mr. Murphy said the French policy has been not to fight their own battles. In addition, they have never stated what their policy for Algeria really is. Mr. Herter said that the oil development by the French in the Sahara now makes mandatory an access route. Mr. Murphy suggested that the President might tell Adenauer that, regarding Algeria, he will be hoping to find out just what de Gaulle's policy is. The President recognized that there are dangers in this situation. It could cause the breaking

up of NATO. He was confident, however, that we will not gain strength for the West by letting the French and the Germans walk on us. Mr. Herter thought this was especially true with regard to the matter of colonialism.

He recalled that de Gaulle will also raise the matter of tripartite over-all planning, envisaging some kind of formal committee for this purpose. The President said he had no objection to conversations, discussions, and even planning so long as there is never any agreement that the majority will rule. Mr. Herter thought we might be able to tell him that we will go as far with the French as we do with the British, pointing out that we have no formal institutions for this purpose. The President said that this would not of course apply to NATO (where there would be tremendous opposition to it) but could apply to interests outside of NATO. On these he would be willing to go pretty far in consultations.

As the meeting ended Mr. Herter told the President that he had a proposed announcement to extend the suspension of testing until December 31st, to be made public when a recess of the test suspension talks in Geneva is announced. He said it was an agreed proposal. The President authorized its release when a recess has been agreed upon.




A. J. Goodpaster
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